

19 June 2017

Subject

Grenfell Tower

Brief for

General

Author

London Fire Brigade

In the early hours of 14 June 2017, the Brigade was called to a fire at a residential block of flats in Lancaster West Estate, W11. London Fire Brigade's Control room took multiple calls to this incident, with the first received at 00.54am. First fire crews were on site in under six minutes. Based on the level of resource needed at this fire we declared it a major incident in the early hours of the morning.

The fire has affected all floors of the 24 storey building, from the second floor up. Over 200 firefighters and officers attended the incident, with 40 appliances and a range of other specialist vehicles, including 14 fire rescue units. Crews wearing breathing apparatus worked in extremely difficult conditions to bring this major fire under control and rescued 65 people.

As of Monday 19 June, three Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) modules are on site and around 50 specialist USAR firefighters are working with a range of equipment and specially trained search dogs as the painstaking search and recovery operation continues to progress inside the building. We are continuing to monitor the stability of the tower's structure alongside building engineers.

This was a tragic and unprecedented fire and our thoughts remain with all those affected by it. The cause of the fire will be investigated by the Brigade's Fire Investigation Unit and by the Metropolitan Police.

Police are also appealing for anyone with images or footage of the Grenfell fire to send them to their investigators via ukpoliceimageappeal.co.uk

- Police have said that 79 people are dead or missing presumed dead and say that figure may still change. In addition, 17 people remain in hospital, with 9 remaining in critical care.

- Firefighters are continuing to work with the Metropolitan Police Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) team and other agencies at the scene.
- We are not expecting to find any more survivors and the operation is now one of recovery rather than rescue. We realise that a lot of people are still incredibly concerned about their loved ones who are still unaccounted for and our priority is to do the best for those waiting for news of their loved ones.
- We are likely to have crews working at the scene for many days to come.
- We do not yet know what caused the fire. We do not know where it started and we do not know why it spread in the way that it did. Investigations have started but it is too soon to say any more.
- This was a tragic and unprecedented fire and our thoughts remain with all those affected by it.
- In addition to firefighting operations our crews continue to work with the local authority to reassure concerned residents from neighbouring blocks in the area and to offer them home fire safety advice.

Casualty Bureau number

The Metropolitan Police Casualty Bureau is open for members of the public who are concerned about relatives or friends who may have been affected by last night's fire. The number for the Casualty Bureau is [REDACTED]. If someone was reported as missing and has been found safe, please call the Casualty Bureau with an update.

Grenfell Tower residents are asked to go to the Portobello Rugby Club at Walmer Road and make themselves known.

Fire safety guidance for people living in high rise buildings / purpose built flats or maisonettes

It is important at this stage to make clear we do not yet know what caused the fire. We do not know where it started and we do not know why it spread in the way that it did.

This is important to understand for anyone who lives in a high rise property or those advising people living in a similar property.

The guidance remains that if you live in a high rise property you are not at more risk of a fire starting, living in a flat is not more dangerous than living in a house.

Reassurance to people about fire safety

London Fire Brigade have been working with all London Resilience Partners, in particular with London Councils to ensure that information is being distributed. The

following statement is being issued by London Councils, which includes the information published by London Fire Brigade on its website.

The guidance remains that if you live in a high rise property you are not at more risk of a fire starting, living in a flat is not more dangerous than living in a house.

"Local authorities are required to ensure appropriate fire safety procedures are in place in council-run blocks, including processes for risk assessment, inspection and fire improvement works. At present we do not know the cause of the fire and need to wait for the outcome of the investigation before drawing conclusions. Clearly though, boroughs will be reviewing the position locally in light of this tragic event.

"We are advising people to familiarise themselves with 'London Fire Brigades advice on fire safety <<http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/know-the-plan.asp>>."

Psychological support for staff involved in the Grenfell Tower fire and rescue

London Fire Brigade has an in-house counselling and welfare team which is an accredited counselling service with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). Counsellors are experienced in dealing with trauma support.

Seven counsellors were on duty on Wednesday, 14 June on the day of the major incident at Grenfell Tower. These counsellors met with almost 200 firefighters and operational staff inside the Paddington Welfare Centre as they came away from the incident. They also met each of the staff members in the Control Centre who had taken 999 emergency calls, including survival guidance, from residents and members of the public throughout the night.

The counselling team plan to conduct a second follow up conversations with each individual, as they return to work on their next shifts, to assess individual mental health as part of our post-critical incident process. If staff appear to be struggling they will be invited to meet with one of the counselling and wellbeing team asap and advised individually about returning to work.